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25X1

11 April 1968

25X1

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CONTENTS

Poland: Factional struggle in the party is producing changes in top government posts. (Page 3)

USSR: Central Committee statement reveals concern over divisiveness and liberalization in Eastern Europe. (Page 5)

Panama: Arias seeks votes (Page 7)

Honduras: Political tension (Page 7)

25X1

25X1

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Next 2 Page(s) In Document Exempt

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*Poland: The party factional struggle is producing further changes in top government posts which are being discussed in the halls of parliament.

The nomination of Defense Minister Marin Spychalski for the ceremonial post of head of state, to replace Edward Ochab, may mean a further weakening of party leader Gomulka's position. Spychalski has been Gomulka's staunchest ally in the party politburo, in which he probably will remain. He has not, however, been able to control the political activities of the officer corps since last summer.

The new defense chief may be 45-year-old Chief of Staff Major General Wojciech Jaruzelski, a strongly pro-Soviet and professionally competent officer. Jaruzelski has no record of political commitments to anybody. He would probably be loyal to whomever wins out in the current struggle. If he is appointed, however, it would indicate that hard-line elements were not successful in placing their own man, General Korczynski, in this key post.

Speculation is rampant in Warsaw over government shifts, indicating that crucial decisions are yet to be reached and that no faction can command the allegiance of a majority. [REDACTED]

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*USSR: Moscow has again revealed its preoccupation with divisiveness among the Warsaw Pact states and a growing concern that "liberalization" in Eastern Europe will encourage domestic dissent.

The statement issued yesterday by the Party Central Committee at the end of a two-day meeting makes clear that these problems still have priority with the Politburo, as they have for the past few months. The center piece of the meeting was a report by General Secretary Brezhnev entitled "On Topical Problems of the International Situation and the CPSU's Struggle to Rally the World Communist Movement. "

Brezhnev's report has not been made public and may not be. The Central Committee statement, however, doubtless echoed him when it dwelt on the theme that the West is intent on rupturing Communist unity and "undermining socialist society from inside. "

The meeting heard reports on other current international problems including Vietnam. On this, the Central Committee statement was terse. It pledged further military assistance to Hanoi but said also that the USSR was acting "in the name of the earliest peace in Vietnam. "

As it has at lower-level meetings in recent months, the leadership stressed that the party must do more to combat "alien" ideas. The call for expanded party vigilance in the cultural field is clearly a reaction to changes in Czechoslovakia and to continuing intellectual protest in the Soviet Union.

Little, if anything, seems to have been said about other outstanding domestic problems, although a number of these have accumulated. Brezhnev's statement in February that the Central Committee meeting would deal with agricultural matters evidently was overtaken by more pressing events.

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11 Apr 68

5

The only high-level political appointment was the addition of Konstantin Katushev to the Central Committee Secretariat. Katushev has been brought in from a provincial party post. At 40, he is the youngest member in the party's top rank by almost a decade and he may have been elevated to show that the ruling circle is not closed to new faces. [REDACTED]

25X1

11 Apr 68

6

25X1

NOTES

Panama: In his first public speech since the Supreme Court revoked the impeachment and conviction of President Robles, National Union presidential candidate Arnulfo Arias called on his supporters to go to the polls on 12 May to rescue the country from the "corrupt and traitorous." He also urged rejection of the draft canal treaties negotiated by the Robles government with the US. Arias has claimed privately that if elected he will push for further negotiations on the basis of the present drafts. Since his failure to stir mass support in the recent crisis, Arias may hope to utilize the emotional canal issue to whip up popular enthusiasm for his candidacy.

25X1

Honduras: The opposition Liberal Party has ordered its members to withdraw from the government and to refuse posts won in the municipal elections on 31 March. The Liberals made this move after President Lopez ignored their ultimatum calling for new elections and the removal of Vice President and Minister of the Presidency Ricardo Zuniga. Zuniga, who admitted to US officials that he masterminded the widespread fraud during the elections, also told them that the ruling Nationalist Party is willing to call new elections in some areas, presumably where voting irregularities were the most blatant. This offer probably will not satisfy the opposition, and political tensions are likely to increase.

25X1

11 Apr 68

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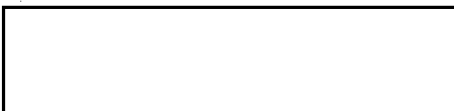
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